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REVIEWS

Foundations of Sociology. By EDWARD ALSWORTH ROSS. New York: The Macmillan Company. Pp. xiv + 410.

It would have been a miracle if the author of *Social Control* had been able to follow it up so soon with another equally original book. The volume before us traverses ground much of which has been often, if not well, surveyed before. The unity of impression made by the earlier book is lacking here, although the studies of which it is composed are organized to serve a definite purpose. In spite of these obvious qualifications, one can hardly read *Foundations of Sociology* without a sense of closing the Antean circuit with reality.

In my judgment, Professor Ross is as hot on the scent of the next important results in sociology as any of the men to whom we are looking for additions to knowledge. This book is, on the whole, devoted to the method, rather than to the content, of knowledge. It does much in the way of clearing the cobwebs out of the sociological skies. It is, however, a general survey rather than a treatise. It will be profitable reading for sufficiently mature students who are making their first approach to sociology. It will be not less useful to older students for review and recapitulation. At the same time, I predict that the author will very soon think beyond certain of the forms in which this summary leaves mooted questions. Indeed, it seems to me that he has not quite done justice to the full results of his own analysis up to date. He has left some things in less satisfactory shape than other parts of his work seem to dictate.

For instance (p. 6) he defines sociology by implication as the science of "social phenomena." As a way of putting it, this seems to me inadequate and unfortunate. No one has better thought out the reasons why than Professor Ross himself. If we stickle for the strict meaning of phrases, there is almost a contradiction of terms in the expression "science of phenomena." Considering phenomena simply as such, we exclude the relations which are the conditions of science. Every science must deal with some sort of relations between phenomena. In chap. 1, therefore, we have, so far as mere words go, a much less mature conception of the scope of sociology than the one contained in chap. 4. On p. 91 the author virtually reaches the con-

clusion that sociology is the science of *the social process,* that is, of the whole system of *relations* between social phenomena. The discussion of the difference between history and sociology (pp. 81 f.) expresses the substance of my reasons for preferring the later to the earlier formula.

Again, the author sometimes says very severe things, which are not quite consistent with his own professions of faith in a slightly different connection. For instance, he says (p. 71):

> That bizarre forerunner of sociology, the philosophy of history, assumed that the experiences of a particular society — Sicily or Poland, for example — are but *parts of a single mighty process.*[1] The life of humanity — or at least of occidental humanity — can be brought under a single formula, etc., etc.

But on p. 14 Professor Ross had summed up the superiority of sociology to older social philosophy in the assertion that institutions are now "studied rather as different aspects of *one social evolution!*" If it is a virtue for the sociologists to think of all social phenomena as a part of one process, why was it a vice for the philosophers of history to do the same thing? Is not the difference in the *nature* of the processes posited in the two cases, rather than in a contrast between assuming and not assuming one process?

It seems to me that Professor Ross has not fully considered the case in the short passage on the *science of religion* (pp. 16, 17). The argument of the book as a whole tends to the conclusion that the science of religion must ultimately become a chapter in sociology. But in this passage the author distinctly disavows this conclusion. Was it not in the interest of *religion,* rather than the *science of religion,* that he was moved to make the disclaimer? No division of conduct can be merely a chapter of a pure science; but I see no escape from the conclusion that *sciences* of abstracted portions of conduct must correlate themselves at last with the science of conduct in general.

One of the most searching chapters in the book is that on "Social Laws." It provokes a great many questions which must be threshed out in due time; but they cannot be referred to with advantage within our present limits. Has the author been happy, however, in formulating his first count against the philosophers (p. 42)? Have they taught us to be too "objective," or not objective enough? Is not the proper indictment brought in the later term "exteriority"

[1] Italics mine.

(p. 54), and should we not guard the former term against compromising associations?

I am disposed to question Professor Ross's application of the terms "law" and "generalization" (p. 66); and it seems to me that in the last two paragraphs of the chapter (p. 69) he has said "social law" when he meant "sociological law."

The "Map of the Sociological Field" (p. 98) contains so many points of departure, and the lines of connection between them are so complicated, that comment must be reserved. At all events, the alterations that have been made since the scheme was first published[2] show that the author's plan of campaign is developing, and that in his mind there is a large tentative element in the whole perspective. On the other hand, even if our point of view brings out a very different correlation of social processes, we can have no doubt that the frontier of discovery will be securely advanced by using this plan as a base of operations.

Chap. 6, "The Properties of Group Units," fails to convince me at points which might not have been left equally questionable if the actual working approach to them had begun with p. 138, thus inverting the order of argument. It seems to me that this would have led to something more than mere transposition of paragraphs. Some closer criticism of the contents would have been suggested. My contention would be that we are at present disposing all too summarily of the perceptive and purposive element in the phenomena of group-action, and crediting to the purely affective element a ratio of influence which final analysis will considerably reduce.

In the beginning of chap. 7 Professor Ross has wisely qualified the language in which his dissent from Professor Giddings was originally expressed.[3] The change is merely verbal, however, and the chapter aims to weaken the prestige of the idea that "social facts admit of a double interpretation, the objective and the subjective." After all, are the two views as far apart as they are made to appear? Is not the gist of the matter that men are in part phenomena of physical nature, as really as the winds and the waves and the trees, while they are also in part virtually as distinct superimpositions upon nature as though they were shot upon the planet from another cosmic system? Do Giddings and Ross really differ here, or is the apparent difference merely in ways of getting at analysis and expression of the different species of factors which they equally recognize?

[2] *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. IX, p. 206. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 526.

There is an issue between Professor Ross and myself about my classification of human interests (p. 165). One's self-satisfaction can certainly not be inflated by failure to convince so acute a thinker, yet in a case about which one feels somewhat secure, the failure may be accounted for as due to faulty expression, rather than to essential error. Professor Ross's reason for rejecting the classification seems to me like refusal to group the states of our Union as "eastern and western," on the ground that some of them are Democratic and others Republican.

Our queries have by no means referred to the most important questions raised by the book. These could hardly be treated fairly without entering upon more extended discussion than our present limits permit. From the very fact that the author is on the skirmish line of method and theory, his positions are exposed, but not necessarily weak. As we intimated above, he is gaining ground as surely as any scholar in our field. The present volume can hardly fail to serve, for some time to come, as one of the most effective path-breakers in sociological inquiry.

ALBION W. SMALL.

L'Année sociologique. Publiée sous la direction d'ÉMILE DURKHEIM. Huitième année (1903–4). Paris: Alcan. Pp. 663.

This annual occupies an important place in our literature, and it has from the beginning performed a useful service. We have to confess, however, that we have never been quite able to calculate its personal equation. Its judgments about sociological work do not place themselves in easily definable relations with those of any other group of scholars in the same field. The point of view occupied by the contributors gives an outlook that can hardly seem clear to anybody else.

For instance, the first of the two *Memoires originaux* in the present number is by M. H. Bourgin, and is entitled "Essai sur une forme d'industrie: l'industrie de la boucherie à Paris au XIX^{e} siècle." The writer says of his own work that its positive results are of three kinds: first, a certain number of facts; second, certain causal explanations; third, certain hypothetical indications (p. 112). We will not deny that the results exhibited in the monograph may have each of those values in a degree that justifies the amount of skilled labor evidently expended in the study. From all that appears